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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0681  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 GUANGZHOU 000507

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TAGS: [CVIS](#) [KFRD](#) [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [CMGT](#) [OEXC](#) [CH](#)  
SUBJECT: Consul General Discusses Visa Issues in  
Fujian

REF: A) GUANGZHOU 505, B) STATE 57338; C) BEIJING  
817; D) GUANGZHOU 325; E) GUANGZHOU 176

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1. (SBU) Summary: Visa outreach and the need for increased cooperation on establishing travel document authenticity were among the key topics raised during Consul General Brian Goldbeck's initial trip to Fujian's provincial capital of Fuzhou, August 12-14. (See ref A for overview and other issues.) Discussions with officials and businesses revealed that additional outreach activities are needed to help combat inaccurate visa-related information for three main groups of travelers: Q business leaders concerned about SAO-related application delays, students victimized by touts, and legitimate tourists interested in spending their travel dollars in the United States. Public security and border control officials said they want to increase anti-fraud cooperation and requested Consulate training on the security features of U.S. official documents to help prevent human smuggling. End Summary.

Welcoming Legitimate Travel to the United States  
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2. (SBU) Visa issues and the importance of facilitating legitimate travel were raised in several meetings during the Consul General's first trip to Fujian. These issues were discussed with Su Zengtian, acting Mayor of Fuzhou, Fuzhou Foreign Affairs Office (FAO), Entry-Exit Division of the Public Security Bureau, local members of the American Chamber of Commerce in South China, and administrators at Fuzhou University. In each meeting, the CG emphasized how fraudulent documents

and illegal immigration hurt legitimate travelers. Fujian interlocutors expressed interest in continued dialogue between the Consulate and Fujian citizens as a method to combat misinformation on immigration issues.

#### Business Leaders Support Increased Visa Outreach

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13. (SBU) American Chamber of Commerce in South China members in Fujian Province expressed concern about perceived and actual delays involved in the issuance of some business travel visas. They noted that certain employees had been unable to receive visas in time to attend planned events or conferences, especially those with hi-tech backgrounds (ref B). One Amcham member told the CG that some of his employees experienced wait times as long as 16 weeks earlier this year. Business leaders also expressed concern that the clearance process is perceived as stricter for applicants from Fujian Province because of its reputation as a center for illegal immigration (refs D and E). The CG responded to these concerns by clarifying current procedures and wait times which he indicated are now down to approximately four weeks (ref B). Comment: However, the persistence of these concerns shows that additional visa outreach to the Fujian business community is necessary to provide accurate, up-to-date information on avoiding clearance-related delays and to facilitate trade and business exchange. End comment. Amcham members welcomed the Consulate's offer to visit and explain current policies and procedures in the near future.

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#### Student Visa Outreach at Fuzhou University

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14. (SBU) Visa outreach was also discussed during the Consul General's meeting with officials from Fuzhou University, home of 25,000 students. Although university officials have previously turned down Consulate offers to provide visa-related information directly to students, Vice President Wang Jian said the university is prepared to allow consulate officers to visit and conduct visa-related outreach. The CG stressed that legitimate students are hurt through misinformation provided by unscrupulous brokers who insert themselves into the visa application process. Such misleading information has led some students to purchase fraudulent documents or misrepresent themselves, which resulted in some students being permanently barred from entering the United States.

#### Expanded Law Enforcement Cooperation Sought

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15. (SBU) In an introductory meeting with Deputy Director Xiao Yuanhong of the Entry and Exit Administration of the Fujian Provincial Public Security Department (PSD), the CG, accompanied by A/RSO (ARSO-I), LES Investigator, Consoff, TDoff, and Econoff, expressed his gratitude for successful cooperation on a series of recent joint fraud investigations. Both the CG and Director Xiao agreed that further law enforcement cooperation and direct communication between the Consulate and Fujian PSD is essential in combating illegal immigration. Deputy Director Bian Zhiqiang of the Fujian Border Control Armed Police Force expressed interest in the Consulate's offer conduct local training sessions to immigration officials and border control authorities recognize and prevent the

usage of counterfeit and forged U.S. travel documents. Director Bian noted that while his department would clearly benefit from additional training, it would require the approval of his superiors in Beijing. Follow-up coordination with the Fujian Armed Police Force is being handled by post ARSO-I.

Comment: Local Officials Still Key to Outreach

16. (SBU) Most of our Fujian interlocutors agreed that business and student travel was good for U.S.-China relations, as well as for the economic growth of Fujian province. Furthermore, most agreed that additional outreach would help stem the spread of the misinformation that is especially virulent in certain areas of Fujian Province. However, one prominent FAO official who, unfortunately, also serves as an important "gatekeeper" for the approval of public affairs outreach to Fuzhou Universities opined that there really isn't a need for increased dialogue between the Consulate and students. She asserted that students who purchased fake documents were the ones at fault and seemed unwilling to address the fact that Consular outreach could fight misinformation and the reliance on unscrupulous visa brokers. End Comment.

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